

# **GREENWICH AND THE ROLE OF SCIENCE IN HUMAN DEVELOPMENT**

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04.05.78

*Following a visit to the Greenwich Museum ...*

Greece laid the bases for intelligent civilisation and intelligent development. There has been an intelligent development in Britain too, but in another stage of history. The two things do not compare.

Italy is the country where intelligent development developed in the field of art, and in the field of science. By 1380, the movements of Earth and Moon had already been investigated in Italy, and plotted down. A passion for navigation was at the root of this. In 1200, Marco Polo<sup>1</sup> went to China, where he stayed 20 years. This could only happen because of previously acquired scientific capabilities.

The case of Britain is different. The Greenwich Museum displays the navigational instruments that were developed in Britain to measure time and distance. The Museum shows how navigation, nature and the mathematical calculation developed in relation to each other. Every aspect of this is very important.

This was a very great contribution to science. It was a science, however, where research had increasingly to do with the development of production. The function of the scientist is different from this. The function of the scientist is objective. This is why the scientists have always surpassed the regimes they happened to live under.

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<sup>1</sup> Marco Polo, 1254-1324 - Venitian Merchant who travelled extensively. He wrote a book that described China.

The precision that provided a ship with its exact position in the world was an immense progress. And that it could do this through angle calculations was an even greater one. British imperialism is still murdering people in Angola, in the Middle East, in Latin America. What has it used all this knowledge for? To kill. And so it was not knowledge acquired objectively. It was not knowledge acquired for the human being to progress. It was acquired by a class, to serve its interests, its class interests.

Nothing in the Museum refers to this of course, but it is not true that all these discoveries, regrouping and integrations of discoveries were the best that could be achieved. Not so! Private property pared them down for its own use, preventing them from being used objectively.

Science is objective, but not when it is used for class interests. There is such a thing as bourgeois science! Science is objective, agreed, but not when used by a class for itself. Observe how even science dedicated to astronomy was sought out for military ends. The same goes for the science of maritime navigation, which is a branch of astronomy - and a branch of the military.

At Greenwich, the visiting public are invited to feel the pride of marine science and of military science. This is not what science does. The most important thing about science is how it puts itself objectively at the service of the progress of humanity.

Observe that the capitalist regime has allowed one major aspect of progress to be made. It is under capitalism that society broke the chain of its submission to nature and ignorance. Capitalism achieved this! But at the same time, it created misery, hunger, wars and epidemics. You will hear nothing of this in the Greenwich museum.

We have a feeling of objective respect for all the scientists. They are not in question here. What we criticise is the function of science in society, because in capitalism, science is not used for the purpose of creating a symbiosis between the human being, nature and the cosmos.

The Greenwich museum shows the human capacity to use instruments, to plot positions, to relate to stars. For an objective researcher, there is enough inspiration in this to start studying the stars themselves, measure the function of energy and similar things. Stars a million times bigger than the Sun are constantly being born. Of itself alone, this fact links the Earth, the human being and the cosmos.

The Workers States show that human liberation is possible. And that humanity is bound for the Cosmos. This is the objective science of today. It is true that humanity had to apply science to development, to society and to the economy. The knowledge of navigation has been a fundamental part of this. Now the greatest feat of knowledge is to understand the function of the Soviet Union.

The Greenwich museum shows how the human being lost its fear, became confident and stopped depending on nature, space, the Moon and the Sun. It is all very important, but it also shows that all the roots of egotism, appropriation and war will continue unless we make the Workers State. This is why capitalist society must be eliminated.

Through Museums, capitalism likes to extol the inventions that were made under its regime. It makes them exalt the sense of national pride to perpetuate its dominion.

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## Extracts